

Docket No. 2000-022DIV1
PATENT

Under MPEP §803, if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.

Although the invention defined by independent claim 1 (apparatus) can be considered patentably distinct from the invention defined by independent claim 50 (method), Applicants respectively submit that examination of all of the presently pending claims could be made without serious burden on the Examiner.

A substantial overlap in claim requirements exists between the elected and non-elected claims. For example, both claim 1 and claim 50 require four or more reactors, with corresponding four or more mixing zones. In each of these claims, at least one component is fed to the mixing zones through a set of flow restrictors that have a varying relative flow resistance. Also, both claim 1 and claim 50 require that four or more varying feed compositions are simultaneously supplied (or adapted for simultaneous supply) to the respective reactors.

Further, claim 57 is a linking claim directly depending from apparatus claims, including claim 1, and as such, includes all of the requirements of the claims from which it depends.

In view of such overlap of claim requirements, the search for the elected claims will necessarily include and overlap with the search for the non-elected claims. All of the presently pending claims could therefore be searched without an undue burden on the Examiner. Accordingly, the present restriction is improper under MPEP §803.

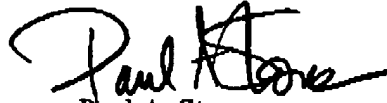
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

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Applicants believe that no further fees are required in connection with the instant amendment. If necessary, however, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fees required in connection with this application to Deposit Account No. 50-0496.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: Jan. 23, 2004

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